

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, SN

SUBJ: FOREIGN ATTORNEYS IN SINGAPORE

1. DEPT. LEGAL ADVISER HAS JUST RECEIVED LETTER FROM CHARLES KIRKWOOD REQUESTING DEPT'S ASSISTANCE WITH RESPECT TO DIFFICULTIES WHICH KIRKWOOD FIRM'S OFFICE IS HAVING IN SINGAPORE. LETTER STATES THAT FIRM'S OFFICE IN SINGAPORE OPENED IN NOVEMBER 1972 FOLLOWING CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL IN SINGAPORE AND WELCOME BY GOS, AND THAT OFFICE HAS BEEN MANNED BY CHRISTOPHER KING, AN ENGLISH ATTORNEY, WHO WAS GIVEN ONE YEAR WORK PERMIT. LETTER FURTHER STATES THAT ATTORNEY GENERAL DID NOT RESPOND TO REQUESTS FROM MR. KING FOR PERMISSION TO ENGAGE A U.S. ATTORNEY OR LOCAL ATTORNEY AS ASSISTANT AND THAT SINGAPORE AUTHORITIES HAVE NOW WITHDRAWN KING'S WORK PERMIT EFFECTIVE JANUARY 28, 1974. LETTER FURTHER STATES THAT SIMILAR ACTION HAS BEEN TAKEN WITH RESPECT TO OTHER FOREIGN ATTORNEYS IN SINGAPORE INCLUDING AT LEAST TWO OTHER AMERICAN ATTORNEYS, DESPITE FACT THAT SINGAPORE LAW DOES NOT BAR PRACTICE OF LAW BY FOREIGN ATTORNEYS. LETTER ALSO REFERS TO ASSISTANCE WHICH U.S. AMBASSADOR HAS SOUGHT TO PROVIDE AMERICAN ATTORNEYS IN THEIR EFFORT TO SECURE WORK PERMIT EXTENSIONS AND ENCLOSES LETTER FROM KING TO AMBASSADOR DATED JANUARY 16, 1974.

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2. IN ORDER BE IN POSITION RESPOND TO KIRKWOOD LETTER, DEPT WOULD APPRECIATE ANY INFORMATION EMBASSY MAY BE ABLE TO PROVIDE CONCERNING ABOVE SITUATION INCLUDING STATUS OF FOREIGN LAWYERS UNDER SINGAPORE LAW IF KNOWN, AND REASON FOR APPARENT GOS CHANGE IN ATTITUDE TOWARD THEM, WHETHER SINGAPORE GOVERNMENT HAS APPLIED LAW AND POLICY (E.G., WORK PERMIT POLICY) EVENLY WITH RESPECT TO ALL FOREIGN LAWYERS OR WHETHER THERE ANY DISCRIMINATION AGAINST AMERICAN LAWYERS OR FIRMS, PRESENT STATUS OF KING (IS HE STILL IN COUNTRY?) AND KIRKWOOD'S SINGAPORE OFFICE, AND ANY ACTION EMBASSY HAS TAKEN (EITHER ON ITS OWN OR IN CONJUNCTION WITH OTHER EMBASSIES WHOSE NATIONALS MAY HAVE BEEN SIMILARLY AFFECTED) ON BEHALF AMERICAN ATTORNEYS AND KIRKWOOD FIRM. WE WOULD ALSO APPRECIATE ANY SUGGESTIONS OR COMMENTS EMBASSY MAY HAVE. KISSINGER

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